



## Beating the I-15 construction blues

**Matt Reichman - Daily Herald | Posted: Sunday, March 28, 2010 12:35 am**

The \$1.7-billion overhaul of Interstate 15 in Utah County is sure to be a boon to business come 2013, but I-15's nearby neighbors might need some strategy to stay solvent until then.

In an effort to minimize collateral damage to these businesses during its I-15 Corridor Expansion project, the Utah Department of Transportation teamed up with local chambers of commerce to offer a series of Coping with Construction workshops.

"There will be some closures and inconveniences," said I-15 CORE spokesperson Heather Barnum. "As much as we're trying to lessen those impacts, there will be some, so we're trying to educate businesses so they can make some adjustments."

These workshops will cover everything from UDOT's TravelWise strategy -- including implementing things like compressed and flexible workweeks, carpooling and telecommuting into your business -- to keeping both employees and customers abreast of the road work via Facebook, Twitter, e-mail and texting.

"We're trying to make it as painless as possible," said UDOT spokesman Scott Thompson. "Of course we'll be in contact throughout the course of the project, but this is one way to get people all at one time."

Barnum said one of UDOT's best advertising tools is its "Know Where, Know Why" page, which displays a map marked by little traffic cones indicating where and how long/extensive road closures will be.

However, these workshops won't do much for the businesses that are directly in the path of the expansion. UDOT has been acquiring the required easements up and down the corridor for a few years now, with hopes of finishing by fall, Barnum said.

Mark Jarvis, owner of the Pit Stop in Spanish Fork, found out last fall that his gas station is located squarely underneath a new interchange in the CORE overlay. UDOT representatives performed an appraisal of the property, and Jarvis is currently waiting for an offer.

"If they treat us right, we'll be fine with it," Jarvis said. "If they try to beat us up too bad, I won't. I've been here 20 years, and had a really successful business."

Barnum said UDOT offers fair value for properties, and also pays relocation costs, "sometimes above and beyond."

Some business owners aren't in the way of the CORE overlay, but say they might as well be considering the choked access the project will create for their businesses. Owners of Jarvis's neighboring businesses, Reams Western Outfitters and Shepherd's Carpet and Furniture, will be nearly surrounded in construction. They're both considering temporary moves.

"It's going to kill us," said Pat Hansen, Reams's manager. "I don't think people will want to get in the mess of it."

Cathy Shepherd, owner of Shepherd's, has been putting up bigger, better-lit signs, but still isn't sure it will do the trick.

Provo River Constructors, an association of local and national contractors, won the bid for I-15 CORE construction. They will begin construction this spring and will finish in December 2012.

The first Coping with Construction workshop, for the Provo/Orem area, is Tuesday from 8 to 10 a.m. at the Health and Justice Building, at 151 S. University Ave.; the Spanish Fork/Payson session is April 6 from 8 to 10 a.m., at the High Chaparral Building, at 475 S. Main St. in Spanish Fork; the Lehi/Lindon session is April 7 from 8 to 10 a.m. at American Fork City Hall, at 31 N. Church St.

• **Matt Reichman** can be reached at (801) 344-2907 or [mreichman@heraldextra.com](mailto:mreichman@heraldextra.com).

If you go

Provo/Orem Area

Tuesday

8-10 a.m.

Health and Justice Building,

151 S. University Ave., Suite 1600, Provo

Spanish Fork-Payson Area

April 6

8-10 a.m.

High Chaparral Room, Spanish Fork Fairgrounds

475 S. Main St., Spanish Fork

Lehi-Lindon Area

April 7

8-10 a.m.

American Fork City Hall

31 N. Church St., American Fork